



MEMORANDUM

To: PLANNING COMMISSION

Date: May 9, 2006

From: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Subject: CALTRANS FENCING AT COCHRANE ROAD/HIGHWAY 101

RECOMMENDATION

Discussion item.

BACKGROUND

At the March 21, 2006 Planning Commission meeting, Commissioner Benich expressed concern regarding the existing cyclone fence lining the Caltrans right-of-way at the Cochrane Road/Highway 101 southbound off-ramp. Specifically, Commissioner Benich was concerned that installation of the fencing is an added (sometimes unanticipated) expense to project applicants and also conflicts with the City's General Plan policies for gateways. Policy 10.2 of the Community Development Element of the General Plan states, "*Apply gateway design standards to all freeway commercial development.*" Policy 12f goes on to read, "*Landscape medians and public areas along major streets and Highway 101 using plant materials, whenever feasible.*" The installation of cyclone fencing contradicts the intent of the General Plan policies to create visually attractive gateways to the City. Therefore, Commissioner Benich directed Staff to research the feasibility of removing the cyclone fence.

CASE ANALYSIS

Staff contacted Caltrans personnel responsible for overseeing the Morgan Hill area. According to Caltrans personnel, fencing is required for access control onto the freeway and to delineate the right-of-way line. In order to remove the cyclone fence, special approval would be required from Caltrans headquarters in Sacramento. An application for the removal of the fence may be made at the location listed below. As an alternative to removing the fencing, the City may apply to replace the cyclone fence with a more decorative fence (e.g. wrought iron). Caltrans has approved wrought iron fences in other locations, provided no sharp points or edges are located at the top of the fence. The cost for materials and installation of the decorative fencing would be the responsibility of the applicant (or the City if City is applicant).

Questions regarding Caltrans right-of-way in the Morgan Hill area should be directed to Kazem Rezaei, Permit Engineer, at (510) 286-4419 or Jim Wong, Field Inspector, at (408) 452-7131.

Attn: Kazem Rezaei, Permit Engineer
Encroachment Permit Division
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
P.O. Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

It should be noted that Staff had previously inquired with Caltrans regarding the possible removal of the fencing at the Dunne Avenue/Highway 101 interchange (adjacent to KFC). However, Caltrans repeatedly stated that the fence was required along their right-of-way.

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